

industry production was 5.6 percent of our gross national product. In 1992, vehicle and parts manufacturing directly accounted for 4.6 percent of our manufacturing employment. During the first quarter of this year, the Big Three accounted for two out of three auto sales in the United States, with the American cars gaining market share in 1993. This did not happen by accident. It required investment, it required reorganization, it required some reductions in spending. Over the last 3 years, \$73 billion have been invested by the Big Three. Since 1981, quality has dramatically improved. The number of customer-reported defects is down by 80 percent. And many of our American cars, by any quality measure, are better than their foreign competitors today. They are also more fuel-efficient and increasingly so.

Our great challenge now is to produce cars of high quality at affordable costs that are environmentally responsible and that preserve good jobs here in America for those who can compete and win. In order to do that, we have to begin by getting our house in order. In the next few days, the United States Congress will have a chance to adopt the biggest deficit-reduction package in the history of this country, one that asks wealthier Americans—who, I might add, have overwhelmingly been supportive of this—to pay most of the burden of the new taxes, which exempts lower middle income Americans from any burden and which asks the Congress to impose unprecedented cuts, including reducing the Federal work force by 150,000 over the next 4 years and cutting over 200 specific Government programs. This is a balanced program. We also invest in jobs, in technology, and education and training. If we can get our house in order, if we can bring our deficit under control, reduce it, make some room for targeted investments in jobs and people, we can turn this country around.

I think that the auto industry has showed us what it takes. You've seen reduction in spending, you've seen painful cuts, you've seen dramatic increases in investment, you've seen American workers not just working harder but smarter, and you have seen years and years and years of disciplined effort rewarded by something 5 years ago or 6 years

ago most people would tell you would never happen: American-made cars winning the quality race and regaining market share. That's what we're going to do with our country.

Thank you and bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. at the National Air and Space Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Owen Bieber, president, United Auto Workers; John F. Smith, Jr., president, General Motors Corp.; Harold A. Poling, chairman and chief executive officer, Ford Motor Co.; Robert J. Eaton, chairman and chief executive officer, Chrysler Corp.

## **Exchange With Reporters at the National Air and Space Museum**

*May 25, 1993*

### **Budget Proposal**

**Q.** Mr. President, is the House going to pass your tax bill?

**The President.** I think they're going to pass the budget bill, yes, which has a lot of cuts in it, and it also has some good things for these folks, good for manufacturing, good for small business. Good bill.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2 p.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

## **Remarks on Signing the Older Americans Month Proclamation**

*May 25, 1993*

Thank you very much, Senator Pryor and Secretary Shalala. Let me also acknowledge in the audience the presence of Senator Bill Cohen from Maine, Congressman Marty Martinez, and Congressman William Hughes. We're glad to see them. And I also want to pay a special word of respect to my good friend, our Vice President's mother, Mrs. Pauline Gore. She's a little too young to be here, but I'm glad to see her here anyway.